



What you need to know about the **HPV vaccine (human papillomavirus)**

HPV is a common infection that causes genital warts and, in some cases, can lead to cancer in both males and females. HPV is spread through sexual contact and has no symptoms. For more information, read the frequently asked questions below. Talk to your primary care provider to make sure your family is up to date on HPV immunization and all recommended vaccines.

How is the HPV vaccine administered?

For people receiving the HPV vaccine before their 15th birthday, two doses are recommended, with the second dose coming 6-12 months after the first. After age 15 – or for certain individuals who are immunocompromised – three doses may be needed. Speak with your provider for more details.

Is the HPV vaccine safe?

HPV immunizations are safe and very effective, with a safety record backed by several years of monitoring and research, as well as documented success in reducing cases of genital warts and HPV-related cancers. Most people can safely receive the HPV vaccine, but there are some exceptions. Be sure to talk to your doctor about whether the HPV vaccine is right for you or your child.

Are there side effects from getting the HPV vaccine?

Besides a bit of soreness at the injection site, most people experience mild side effects (if any). A small number of patients experience a brief period of lightheadedness. Your primary care provider can give the vaccine in-office and provide a place to rest for a few minutes to prevent fainting or dizziness.

What's the ideal age for receiving the vaccine? Can adults get the HPV vaccine if they haven't had it?

HPV vaccination is recommended at age 11-12 because it is best to receive it before becoming sexually active. The HPV vaccine is approved for adults through 26 years of age. Some adults aged 27-45 with certain health factors should also receive HPV immunization. Talk to your provider for more information.

Can pregnant women get the HPV vaccine?

Although HPV vaccines have not been linked to adverse pregnancy outcomes, the HPV vaccine is not recommended for use during pregnancy. People known to be pregnant should delay initiation of the vaccination series until after the pregnancy. If you become pregnant between doses, future doses should be delayed until you are no longer pregnant.

To learn more about the HPV vaccine, or other routine immunizations for your family, talk to your primary care provider or visit beimmunekansas.org.

